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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to identify teacher behaviors that college students deem unethical, measure the strength of student attitudes toward the 20 most frequently mentioned behaviors, and measure the degree to which the students have personally found the 20 behaviors to be problems. The first part of the study elicited examples of unethical teacher behavior from 65 students in three communication courses. The 20 most frequently mentioned behaviors were used to construct a questionnaire administered to 155 students at the same college in the summer of 1982. The behaviors that were most unethical and that created the most problems were showing lack of care about students and their concerns; showing favoritism in grading; giving students an unreasonable amount of work; and showing prejudice against students because of race, sex, religion, attire, or major. Least unethical and causing the fewest problems were presenting material with little or no relationship to the course, adding unannounced assignments during the semester, using offensive language in class, and giving unannounced quizzes. (The actual research instrument is included in the text.) (JL)

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THE ETHICAL DECISION-POINTS FOR THE TEACHER IN RELATION TO STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF UNETHICAL TEACHER BEHAVIORS

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Presented at the 68th Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association

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THE ETHICAL DECISION-POINTS FOR THE TEACHER IN RELATION TO STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF UNETHICAL TEACHER BEHAVIORS

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To teach is to choose.[1] Before a teacher engages a single student in learning, he or she faces numerous decisions about course content, organization, and instructional procedures. Upon entering the classroom, a teacher confronts decisional variables engendered by the setting, the students, his or her lesson plans, and the pedagogical materials. Soon thereafter the matter of testing and grading must be faced. For teachers who have contacts with students outside the classroom--either voluntarily or by administrative mandate--there are other choices to be made, those that relate to dyadic social behavior, often in the context of organizational or academic advisorship.

These myriad decisions result in teacher behaviors that are observable to students, who then make judgments about their ethicality.[2] This study utilizes students' proclivity to form these assessments. It attempts to: 1) identify teacher behaviors that students deem unethical, 2) measure the strength of student attitudes toward the twenty most frequently-mentioned behaviors, and 3) measure the degree to which the students have personally found the twenty behaviors problematic.

PROCEDURE

For the first part of this study, the writer used students from her three courses at West Chester State College during the 1982 spring semester. She asked each student to give an anonymous, written reply in class to this open-ended question: "What do you consider unethical for a teacher to do in fulfillment of his/her professional obligations?" Rather than offering a denotative definition of "unethical," she provided two examples of behaviors that she herself viewed as unethical: for a teacher to proposition a student and for a teacher to give additional major assignments to those announced at the beginning of the course. Twelve minutes of class time were allotted for the students to answer the question. Twenty-four students responded in Fundamentals of Speech Communication, twenty-one in Small Group Communication, and twenty in Nonverbal Communication, thus providing a total of sixty-five respondents.

The next step was to analyze and tabulate the written replies. They yielded a list of ninety-three teacher behaviors that emanate from choices made at six main decision-points, those involving: 1) course content, eleven behaviors; 2) course organization, four behaviors; 3) teaching methods, eight behaviors; 4) conduct of classroom, thirty-one behaviors; 5) testing and grading, twenty-eight behaviors; and 6) settings outside of classroom, eleven behaviors. Excluded from the list were two matters that concerned administrative decision rather than teacher choice, two that were not understandable, and two that seemed to be student, not teacher, behaviors. Although the general category of favoritism was men-

tioned by students a total of seventeen times, it was not included per se because several other behaviors, namely 31, 53, 75, 82, 85, and possibly 93, subsume it. (See next section.)

The second part of the study was to prepare a questionnaire that utilized the most frequently-mentioned behaviors. Out of the ninety-three items, twenty behaviors, which represented all six categories enumerated above, were found to have tabulations of three or more: two behaviors from course content, two from course organization, one from teaching methods, nine from conduct of classroom, five from testing and grading, and two from settings outside of classroom.

The researcher calculated that these twenty items would be a workable basis for a questionnaire that would require no more than twenty minutes of her colleagues' class time for it to be administered. Section A contained four questions that elicited demographic information about the subjects, and Section B consisted of twenty odd-numbered statements, each specifying a behavior previously judged unethical by the sixty-five respondents, and twenty even-numbered statements about the problematic nature of each behavior. Students were asked to respond along a five-item Likert scale for the odd-numbered items and along a four-item Likert scale for the even-numbered items.

The questionnaire was then administered to 155 subjects during the 1982 summer school at West Chester State College. This time period seemed advantageous because students from schools other than West Chester would be in attendance, and thus

the basis for generalizing the results would be extended. Out of the 155 subjects, thirty-three or 21 percent were non-West Chester students. Six of the total number were enrolled in Small Group Communication, five in Directing and Producing the Documentary Television Program, twelve in General Semantics, fourteen in Introduction to Radio-TV-Film, twenty-five in Fundamentals of Speech Communication, nine in Computer Math, nine in Classroom Management, thirty-nine in Mainstreams in History (two sections), thirteen in United States History II, and twenty-three in Physiology.[3]

Shown below is the questionnaire described above:

STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARD THE ETHICALITY
OF CERTAIN TEACHER BEHAVIORS

On the answer sheet please blacken the circle representing your answer according to the key shown under each question or statement.

Section A: Information About Respondents

1. What is your classification in school?
   1. freshman or sophomore 2. junior or senior 3. grad student 4. other

2. During the regular school year do you attend or plan to attend West Chester State College?
   1. Yes 2. No
   If YES, proceed to item 5.

3. If you answered NO to 2. above, do you attend or plan to attend some other school during the regular school year?
   1. Yes 2. No

4. If you answered YES to 3. above, indicate the type school you attend or plan to attend during the regular school year.
   1. public junior college 2. four-year state college
   3. state university 4. private college or university
   5. other

Section B: Respondent's Attitudes

In the section below please indicate first your attitude concerning the stated behavior and then the degree to which you have

personally found this behavior to be a problem.

5. It is unethical for a teacher to present material that has little or no relationship to the course.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

6. I personally have found the behavior specified in 5. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

7. It is unethical for a teacher to give students an unreasonable amount of work.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

8. I personally have found the behavior specified in 7. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

9. It is unethical for a teacher to concentrate the assignments from a course to one part of a semester.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

10. I personally have found the behavior specified in 9. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

11. It is unethical for a teacher to add assignments during the semester to those announced at the beginning of the semester.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

12. I personally have found the behavior specified in 11. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

13. It is unethical for a teacher not to distribute a course syllabus to the students.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

14. I personally have found the behavior specified in 13. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

15. It is unethical for a teacher to physically abuse a student.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

16. I personally have found the behavior specified in 15. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

17. It is unethical for a teacher to be absent frequently from class.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

18. I personally have found the behavior specified in 17. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

19. It is unethical for a teacher to use offensive language in class.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

20. I personally have found the behavior specified in 19. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

21. It is unethical for a teacher to show lack of care about students and their concerns.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

22. I personally have found the behavior specified in 21. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

23. It is unethical for a teacher to come late frequently to class.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

24. I personally have found the behavior specified in 23. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

25. It is unethical for a teacher to humiliate a student in class.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

26. I personally have found the behavior specified in 25. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

27. It is unethical for a teacher to show prejudice against a student because of race, sex, religion, attire, or major.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

28. I personally have found the behavior specified in 27. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

29. It is unethical for a teacher to try to impose his/her own values or beliefs on students.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

30. I personally have found the behavior specified in 29. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

31. It is unethical for a teacher not to consider the difficulty of a test when grading it.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

32. I personally have found the behavior specified in 31. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

33. It is unethical for a teacher not to consider the individual effort and class participation of a student as criteria for grading.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

34. I personally have found the behavior specified in 33. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

35. It is unethical for a teacher to give unannounced quizes.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

36. I personally have found the behavior specified in 35. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

37. It is unethical for a teacher to test students on material not covered in class.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

38. I personally have found the behavior specified in 37. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

39. It is unethical for a teacher to show favoritism in grading.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

40. I personally have found the behavior specified in 39. above to be:
1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

41. It is unethical for a teacher not to hold office hours as he/she has announced or posted.
1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

42. I personally have found the behavior specified in 41. above to be: 1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

43. It is unethical for a teacher to proposition (sexually) a student. 1. strongly agree 2. agree 3. feel neutral 4. disagree 5. strongly disagree

44. I personally have found the behavior specified in 43. above to be: 1. a very serious problem 2. a serious problem 3. a slight problem 4. not a problem

THANKS FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE!

RESULTS

Table I shows the list of ninety-three behaviors extracted from the written responses of the sixty-five students who were used for the first part of this study.

TABLE I

STUDENT-GENERATED LIST OF UNETHICAL TEACHER BEHAVIORS

Unethical Teacher Behaviors	No. of Times Behavior Mentioned
TEACHER BEHAVIORS RELATED TO COURSE CONTENT	
1. To cover too little material in course	1
2. To teach material not useful for real world	1
3. To assign nonessential work	1
4. To not present examples during lecture and discussion	1
5. To make assignments and then not require that they be completed	1
6. To not review assignments and tests	1
7. To depart substantially from course syllabus	2
8. To talk above level of students	2
9. To talk down to students	2
10. To present material that has little or no relationship to course	3
11. To give students an unreasonable amount of work	7

TEACHER BEHAVIORS RELATED TO COURSE ORGANIZATION

12.	To give assignments that overlap	1
13.	To move quickly into course content during first week of class	1
14.	To concentrate assignments from course to one part of semester	3
15.	To add assignments during semester to those announced at beginning of semester	11

TEACHER BEHAVIORS RELATED TO TEACHING METHODS

16.	To not lecture but have students give reports	1
17.	To use "off-the-wall" teaching methods	1
18.	To give busywork to take up class time	1
19.	To use fear as motivational tactic	1
20.	To not give students opportunity to ask questions	1
21.	To "lecture" straight from text	1
22.	To use lecture method as sole method of class instruction	2
23.	To not distribute course syllabus to students	3

TEACHER BEHAVIORS RELATED TO CONDUCT OF CLASSROOM

24.	To not take roll	1
25.	To not dismiss class on time	1
26.	To not hand back students' papers	1
27.	To advocate use of drugs or liquor	1
28.	To put student on the spot	1
29.	To be rude to students	1
30.	To force students to express opinions	1
31.	To ignore student's questions	1
32.	To answer only "good" questions	1
33.	To show lack of interest in teaching	1
34.	To show antagonism toward class	1
35.	To shout at students	1
36.	To bully students physically or emotionally	1
37.	To show lack of understanding of students' problems	1

38.	To wait until last part of period to give assignment	2
39.	To show close-mindedness	2
40.	To skip class without excuse	2
41.	To be unprepared for class	2
42.	To ignore students' interest in contributing to class discussion	2
43.	To smoke in class	2
44.	To dress sloppily in class	2
45.	To come to class intoxicated	2
46.	To offer bribe to student	2
47.	To physically abuse student	3
48.	To be absent frequently from class	3
49.	To use offensive language in class	3
50.	To show lack of care about students and their concerns	3
51.	To come late frequently to class	4
52.	To humiliate student in class	9
53.	To show prejudice against student because of race, sex, religion, attire, or major	12
54.	To try to impose his/her own values or beliefs on students	14

TEACHER BEHAVIORS RELATED TO TESTING AND GRADING

55.	To not offer constructive criticism on students' work	1
56.	To exclude certain grades from range of possiblity for students	1
57.	To give only one exam per semester	1
58.	To allow cheating on tests	1
59.	To not proctor exams	1
60.	To not tell students how they will be graded	1
61.	To give "A" to every student in class, irrespective of merit	1
62.	To give tricky tests on regular basis	1
63.	To lower grades of students who do not participate in class	1

64.	To not provide extra credit opportunities for problem students	1
65.	To not allow students to make up work	1
66.	To give make-up tests on indiscriminate basis (irrespective of reason why student did not take test when given to class)	1
67.	To lower grade due to absenteeism	1
68.	To change format of successive tests, such as from multiple choice to essay, without notifying students	1
69.	To ignore or overlook plagiarism	1
70.	To not grade papers	1
71.	To change grading system in middle of semester	1
72.	To change mind about letting students make up a test	1
73.	To let failing students pass with grade of "D"	1
74.	To give students NG (no grade) for semester if they did not do assignment accurately	1
75.	To not have uniform requirements for each group involved in projects	1
76.	To show discrepancy between oral feedback (positive) and grade (negative)	1
77.	To go against wishes of class in regard to grading in course	1
78.	To not consider difficulty of test when grading it	3
79.	To not consider individual effort and class participation of student as criteria for grading	4
80.	To give unannounced quizes	4
81.	To test students on material not covered in class	9
82.	To show favoritism in grading	9

TEACHER BEHAVIORS RELATED TO SETTINGS OUTSIDE OF CLASSROOM

83.	To pry into student's personal business	1
84.	To discuss student's grades or other personal business with teachers or other students	1
85.	To date students	1
86.	To drink during working hours	1

87.	To set winning as the most important part of competitive cocurricular or extra-curricular activities	1
88.	To not credit a student in published research on which he/she helped teacher	1
89.	To sign student's registration sheet but not actually advise student	1
90.	To use nonacademic grounds to persuade students not to take a course	1
91.	To behave outside class contrarily to what he/she has said in class	2
92.	To not hold office hours as he/she has announced or posted	8
93.	To proposition (sexually) student	15

Table II arranges the twenty most frequently-mentioned teacher behaviors into a rank order of unethicality based upon the means derived from the responses to the odd-numbered statements in the questionnaire. Numerical values of one to five were assigned to the scale: 1. SA (strongly agree); 2. A (agree); 3. N (neutral); 4. D (disagree); and 5. SD (strongly disagree).

TABLE II

RANK ORDER OF UNETHICALITY OF TEACHER BEHAVIORS

Rank	Teacher Behavior	Percent of Responses					Mean
		SA	A	N	D	SD	
1	To physically abuse student	89.0	8.4	2.6	.0	.0	1.135
2	To show prejudice against student because of race, sex, religion, attire, or major	85.8	12.3	1.3	.6	.0	1.168
3	To show favoritism in grading	76.1	20.6	2.6	.6	.0	1.277
4	To humiliate student in class	74.8	18.1	5.8	.6	.6	1.342
5	To show lack of care about students and their concerns	65.2	25.2	8.4	.0	1.3	1.471
6	To proposition (sexually) student	69.7	18.1	7.7	1.9	2.6	1.497
7	To be absent frequently from class	58.7	30.3	9.0	1.3	.6	1.548

8	To give students unreasonable amount of work	57.4	31.6	9.0	.6	1.3	1.568
9	To not hold office hours as he/she has announced or posted	58.7	30.3	7.7	1.3	1.9	1.574
10	To not consider individual effort and class participation of student as criteria for grading	52.3	29.7	11.6	4.5	1.9	1.742
11	To not consider difficulty of test when grading it	45.8	34.8	14.2	4.5	.6	1.794
12	To test students on material not covered in class	58.7	16.1	11.0	12.3	1.9	1.826
13	To come late frequently to class	41.3	36.8	18.7	1.9	1.3	1.852
14	To try to impose his/her own values or beliefs on students	42.6	34.8	15.5	3.9	3.2	1.903
15	To not distribute course syllabus to students	34.2	38.1	19.4	7.1	1.3	2.032
16	To use offensive language in class	27.7	33.5	29.0	9.0	.6	2.213
17	To present material that has little or no relationship to course	32.9	25.2	19.4	18.1	4.5	2.361
18	To concentrate assignments from course to one part of semester	16.1	38.7	32.3	11.0	1.9	2.439
19	To give unannounced quizes	23.9	26.5	28.4	17.4	3.9	2.510
20	To add assignments during semester to those announced at beginning of semester	20.6	32.9	22.6	19.4	4.5	2.542

The only behavior on which not a single student evidenced disagreement (D) or strong disagreement (SD) was the first rank: to physically abuse students. The fifth rank (to show lack of care about students and their concerns) showed no disagreement (D), but 1.3 percent of the subjects indicated strong disagreement (SD). Two others (rank two: to show prejudice against student because of race, sex, religion, attire, or major, and rank three: to show favoritism in grading) did not register any strong disagreement (SD). The balance of the twenty behaviors evoked responses along all five points of the scale. Not until

rank nineteen was reached did the means almost broach the disagreement side of the scale, and even then the highest mean (behavior twenty) was only 2.542, still representing 53.5 percent of the subjects on the agreement side. Thus there was more agreement than disagreement that all twenty teacher behaviors were unethical.

The extent to which the subjects have personally found the twenty behaviors to be problematic is shown on Table III. Again points were assigned to the scale, this time from one to four: 1. VSP (very serious problem); 2. SP (serious problem); 3. SLP (slight problem); 4. NP (not a problem). The numbers that appear under the fifth or blank column indicate student error in marking the answer sheet: .6 represents one student, 1.3 represents two students, and 1.9 represents three students. Tne scale weight is five.

TABLE III

RANK ORDER OF TEACHER BEHAVIORS CONSIDERED PROBLEMATIC

Rank	Teacher Behavior	Percent of Responses					Mean
		VSP	SP	SLP	NP	--	
1	To give students unreasonable amount of work	17.4	21.9	42.6	18.1	.0	2.613
2	To show lack of care about students and their concerns	18.1	23.9	32.9	24.5	.6	2.658
3	To not consider difficulty of test when grading it	13.5	23.2	37.4	25.8	.0	2.755
4	To test students on material not covered in class	16.8	16.8	31.6	34.8	.0	2.845
5	To not consider individual effort and class participation of student as criteria for grading	13.5	18.1	32.9	35.5	.0	2.903
6	To show favoritism in grading	16.1	14.8	29.0	39.4	.6	2.935

7	To not hold office hours as he/she has announced or posted	12.9	16.8	29.7	39.4	1.3	2.994
8	To humiliate student in class	14.2	12.9	30.3	41.3	1.3	3.026
9	To show prejudice against student because of race, sex, religion, attire, or major	18.7	8.4	22.6	48.4	1.9	3.065
10	To concentrate assignments from course to one part of semester	3.2	17.4	47.1	32.3	.0	3.084
11	To add assignments during semester to those announced at beginning of semester	4.5	14.8	43.2	36.1	1.3	3.148
12	To present material that has little or no relationship to course	6.5	15.5	31.0	45.2	1.9	3.206
13	To not distribute course syllabus to students	8.4	12.9	27.1	51.0	.6	3.226
14	To try to impose his/her own values or beliefs on students	7.7	9.0	35.5	47.7	.0	3.232
15	To come late frequently to class	7.1	11.0	31.6	49.7	.6	3.258
16	To give unannounced quizes	3.2	7.7	33.5	55.5	.0	3.413
17	To be absent frequently from class	6.5	10.3	19.4	62.6	1.3	3.419
18	To use offensive language in class	7.1	3.9	18.1	71.0	.0	3.529
19	To proposition (sexually) student	7.7	4.5	13.5	73.5	.6	3.548
20	To physically abuse student	9.7	4.5	3.2	80.6	1.9	3.606

The behaviors ranked from one through twelve, as well as ranks fourteen and fifteen, presented some degree of problem for more than half of the subjects. Drawing the highest percentages in the very serious problem category (VSP) were behaviors ranked second and ninth respectively: to show lack of care about students and their concerns (18.1 percent) and to show prejudice against student because of race, sex, religion, attire, or major (18.7 percent). Behaviors creating serious problems for over 20 percent of the subjects were ranked one (to give students unreasonable amount of work, 21.9 percent), two (to show lack of care about students and their concerns, 23.9), and three (to not con-

sider difficulty of test when grading it, 23.2). Only six behaviors, those ranked thirteen (to not distribute course syllabus to students), sixteen (to give unannounced quizes), seventeen (to be absent frequently from class), eighteen (to use offensive language in class), nineteen (to proposition /sexually/student), and twenty (to physically abuse student),did not pose problems for more than 50 percent of the subjects.

Another way of looking at the data derived from the questionnaire is to compare the rank order of unethicality of teacher behaviors with the rank order of teacher behaviors considered problematic. Those behaviors that have the lowest combined ranks in both qualities can then be seen as the worst problems among the twenty behaviors. Table IV presents a comparison of the ranks from Tables II and III for each behavior. The index was obtained from the linear summation of the two ranks divided by the total possible number of ranks, that is, forty. The lowest indexes point to the most serious problems.

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF THE RANKS SHOWN
IN TABLES II AND III FOR EACH BEHAVIOR

Teacher Behavior	Unethicality Ranks from Table I	Problematic Ranks from Table II	Index
To physically abuse student	1	20	.525
To show prejudice against student because of race, sex, religion, attire, or major	2	9	.275
To show favoritism in grading	3	6	.225
To humiliate student in class	4	8	.300
To show lack of care about students and their concerns	5	2	.175

To proposition (sexually) student	6	19	.625
To be absent frequently from class	7	17	.600
To give students unreasonable amount of work	8	1	.225
To not hold office hours as he/she has announced or posted	9	7	.400
To not consider individual effort and class participation of student as criteria for grading	10	5	.375
To not consider difficulty of test when grading it	11	3	.350
To test students on material not covered in class	12	4	.400
To come late frequently to class	13	15	.700
To try to impose his/her own values or beliefs on students	14	14	.700
To not distribute course syllabus to students	15	13	.700
To use offensive language in class	16	18	.850
To present material that has little or no relationship to course	17	12	.725
To concentrate assignments from course to one part of semester	18	10	.700
To give unannounced quizes	19	16	.875
To add assignments during semester to those announced at beginning of semester	20	11	.775

The behaviors that emerged in combination as the most unethical and the most problematic were: first, to show lack of care about students and their concerns; second (tie) to show favoritism in grading and to give students unreasonable amount of work; and fourth, to show prejudice against student because of race, sex, religion, attire, or major. At the other end of the index--where ranks in combination point to the least unethical and least problematic behaviors--these four behaviors appeared in ranks seventeen through twenty: to present material that has

little or no relationship to course, to add assignments during semester to those announced at beginning of semester, to use offensive language in class, and to give unannounced quizes.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The fact that the two examples used by the researcher when she asked the sixty-five students for written input were among the four behaviors most frequently mentioned by them seems to indicate bias. This might have been avoided if she had used an uncomplicated denotative definition of "unethical" and let the students think independently.

2. One might argue that the list of ninety-three behaviors contains some that do not involve ethical matters but merely pedagogical preferences. This seems to be particularly true of behaviors tabulated once, such as not taking roll or giving assignments that overlap. By including on the questionnaire only those behaviors mentioned three or more times, it was hoped that behaviors unrelated or marginally related to ethics would be eliminated through a sort of consensus. Whether they were or not is less important than what the list reveals about student perceptions of teacher behaviors.

3. Within the six areas that have been designated by the writer as decision-points there are numerous possiblities for teachers to manifest what students, to varying degrees, considered unethical behaviors. This being so, these areas also provide teachers with opportunities to choose ethical behavior.[3]

4. This study shows that all twenty of the examined teacher behaviors presented problems, even very serious ones, for some students. This fact points to the need for the teacher to examine his or her philosophy and practice of education to the end that behaviors detrimental to students will be reduced.[4]

NOTES

[1]This sentence is an adaptation of a chapter title, "To Live Is To Choose," from Paul Tournier, The Meaning of Persons (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1957). Tournier makes the point that a true choice necessarily implies reference to a scale of values. A person who denies all values finds himself in an impasse where he is incapable of choice. See 198-216, in particular pp. 208-209.

[2]Useful treatments of ethics in teaching are: R. S. Peters, Ethics and Education, Keystones of Education Series (Atlanta: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1967) and Sidney Hook, Paul Kurtz, and Miro Todorovich, eds., The Ethics of Teaching and Scientific Research (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1977). See also Chapter 10, "The Teacher as a Member of a Profession," in B. J. Chandler, Education and the Teacher (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1963), pp. 234-64.

[3]Robert C. Neville, The Cosmology of Freedom (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), p. 174.

[4]Nilsen urges that the classroom be used as a forum to discuss the ethics of interaction between students and teachers. He also suggests some personal behaviors that teachers should examine. See Thomas R. Nilsen, Ethics of Speech Communication, 2d ed., The Bobbs-Merrill Series in Speech Communication (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1974), pp. 103-104.

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